

Addressing hunger and malnutrition, DSWD priority – Sec. Gatchalian

Newly-confirmed Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Rex Gatchalian on Tuesday emphasized that it is high time for the government to increase the budget for the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) to ensure that its goal of addressing hunger and malnutrition in the country is attained.

“Iyong masabi lang na may feeding program pero hindi naman natin pinondohan nang tama, ay nakalulungkot (It is sad to say that we have a feeding program, but we do not fund it properly),” Secretary Gatchalian said in reply to Senator Grace Poe’s query during the deliberation of the CA’s Committee on Labor, Social Welfare, and Migrant Workers.

Secretary Gatchalian called for the support of various stakeholders, particularly of the legislators, saying that “we really need to put the effort in moving that budget to 27 pesos per head or else we are going around the circle or if I may dare say so, that it is going to be wasteful spending.”

Currently, a Php21.00 fund per child enrolled in the Child Development Center (CDC) and Supervised Neighborhood Play was allotted for the implementation of the feeding program.

“We would again push for 27 pesos because iyong 21 is not enough. Parang ang nangyayari lang, nilagyan natin ng pondo para masabi lang na may feeding program tayo (It seems like what’s happening is that we allocated funds just to say that we have a feeding program),” the DSWD chief pointed out.

According to Secretary Gatchalian, a massive survey among the program implementers of the SFP was conducted by the DSWD to determine which among the different modalities of feeding

program is the most effective.

The feeding program modalities include a central kitchen, raw goods procurement by DSWD, and local government direct implementation, the DSWD secretary said.

Secretary Gatchalian also mentioned that the DSWD partnered with the Department of Health (DOH), the World Bank (WB) and other concerned agencies to implement the Philippine Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Program (PMNP) in an effort to harmonize the delivery of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions to reduce stunting in targeted localities around the country.

“While DOH takes care of the nutrition-specific program, the DSWD takes care of nutrition sensitivity. Meaning, study shows it is not just about feeding them but also about the overall quality of the environment for the first 1000 days,” the Secretary explained.

For its part, the DSWD will focus on providing and holding community-based nutrition service delivery and multi-sectoral nutrition convergence through the Kapit-Bisig Laban Sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (Kalahi-CIDSS) program, including the construction of WASH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools) facilities and improvement of food security facilities among others.

“It is a community-driven program that says ano ba ang kulang sa iyong maliit na lugar. So these are the poorest LGUs with the highest stunting rates. They have been pre-selected... Sa amin kasi, nutrition-sensitive so meaning wala ka bang wash facilities? Wala ka bang day care center? Things that will aid nutrition” (It is a community-driven program that aims to identify what is lacking in your small area. So these are the poorest local government units (LGUs) with the highest stunting rates. They have been pre-selected... For us, it is nutrition-sensitive, meaning, do you lack wash facilities? Do

you lack a daycare center? Things that will support nutrition), the Secretary added.

Among the goals of the PMNP is to achieve key impacts on the health and nutrition of every Filipino child, as well as to strengthen the LGUs' capacities in terms of primary healthcare delivery of maternal and child health services. #

DSWD assists more than 1,000 rescued victims of 'scam hub' in Pampanga



Social workers of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Field Office III assess the rescued alleged labor trafficked victims in Clark Sun Valley Hub Corporation located at the Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone, Mabalacat, Pampanga, on May 4, to determine their needed assistance.

More than 1,000 victims of a 'scam hub' earlier rescued by the elements of the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) in Mabalacat, Pampanga are now being assisted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The May 4 rescue operation and implementation of search warrants on the alleged scam hub at the Clark Sun Valley Hub Corporation located at the Clark Freeport and Special Economic Zone in Mabalacat, Pampanga was conducted by various law enforcement agencies and members of the IACAT.

Of the 1,048 rescued victim-survivors, 129 were identified as Filipinos while the rest were of foreign nationalities who

came from China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

The victim-survivors were assessed by the social workers of DSWD's Field Office (FO) III, which covers the Central Luzon region, to determine the necessary assistance needed.

The DSWD, as the co-chair of the IACAT, assisted and provided financial aid to the rescued alleged victims of labor trafficking.

Some 60 Filipino victim-survivors received Php5,000 each through the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) program of the DSWD. The remaining Filipino victims are continuously being assessed by the Central Luzon Field Office.

The foreign nationals, on the other hand, were assisted by the Bureau of Immigration (BI) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), together with the Department of Health (DOH) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The victim-survivors are temporarily billeted at the Tahanan ng Inyong Pag-Asa Center, an IACAT shelter and one-stop-shop for rescued trafficked victims.

The others are under the custody of the Philippine National Police – Anti-Cybercrime Group (PNP-ACG) in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

The victim-survivors, according to the PNP- ACG, are willing to file a formal complaint or to testify against the alleged perpetrators.

The rescued victims were provided with packed meals from May 5 to 7 by the DSWD Field Office III, the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office Pampanga and the City Social Welfare and Development Office of Mabalacat City.

As an active member-agency of IACAT, the DSWD will continue to provide comprehensive service to the victim-survivors to

assist them in the recovery and reintegration to society. #

DSWD, UN-FAO to scale up efforts to institutionalize 'Anticipatory Action'

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN-FAO) are collaborating to scale up efforts in institutionalizing the Anticipatory Action (AA) approach in the Philippines.

In operationalizing the DSWD-FAO collaboration, more than a hundred specialists from a community of AA practitioners will gather for the 6th National Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Action in Clark Field, Pampanga on May 11-12.

The 2-day event, which banners the theme "Scaling up, Learning together," will be attended by participants from national government agencies, humanitarian institutions and development organizations.

The event will also highlight knowledge-sharing sessions and learning activities geared towards the adoption of Anticipatory Action in social assistance programs and social protection systems in the Philippines.

Anticipatory Action is defined as an innovative approach that systematically links early warnings to a set of interventions aimed at protecting families and their assets ahead of a hazard.

"The platform is an opportunity for key actors to assess the country's AA landscape, identify the challenges as well as

areas for improvement in its implementation,” Assistant Secretary Diana Rose S. Cajipe of DSWD’s Disaster Response Management Group (DRMG) said.

Asst. Secretary Cajipe pointed out that with the sustained interest of development practitioners from various fields including in disaster management and social protection, the platform “should serve to strengthen collaboration among government, civil society, the humanitarian and the development community, to help address food insecurity and disruption of livelihood during times of disasters.”

Significance of Anticipatory Action

In the past 10 years, the strategic shift from responding to anticipating the impact of predictable shocks has been gaining attention globally.

Increased awareness about best practices of AA, such as inter-agency collaboration to facilitate aid coordination, has been influencing countries in Southeast Asia to adopt the approach.

In the Philippines, the FAO has been working with humanitarian and development partners in piloting the approach at the local government level and helping build their capacity.

The FAO has also been closely collaborating with the DSWD in employing AA to help strengthen the government’s social protection systems and policies to proactively reach and support vulnerable populations ahead of forecast shocks.

“Scaling up our efforts is critical to help mitigate the impacts of climate-induced hazards and build resiliency among the most vulnerable. FAO is committed to sustain the momentum with our partners in changing the way disasters are managed using the Anticipatory Action approach in the Philippines, aligned with the various efforts from international and national non-governmental agencies and government partners,” Lionel Dabbadie, FAO Representative in the Philippines,

explained.

With the support of the European Union (EU), the national platform is organized in partnership with the members of the National AA Technical Working Group (TWG) that include the World Food Program; Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC); German Red Cross; START Network; the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the Department of Science and Technology (DOST); the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG); the Department of Budget and Management (DBM); the Office of Civil Defense (OCD); and, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

The community of practitioners also counts government counterparts from the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and local government units (LGUs). #

DSWD Secretary Gatchalian speaks before the 29th ASCC Meeting in Indonesia